



**Public Oversight Hearing on Fiscal Year 2002 Spending and
The Status of Fiscal Year 2003 Spending and Program Implementation
March 4, 2003**

Good afternoon, Madam Chairperson, members of the Council, and staff. I am Leslie Hotaling, Director of the DC Department of Public Works (DPW). With me today is Pamela Graham our Associate Chief Financial Officer, Government Services; Tom Henderson, Solid Waste Management Administrator; Kevin Green, Administrator, Office of Administrative Services; Michael Belak, Chief Technology Officer; and Ron Flowers, Fleet Management Administrator.

I would like to take this public opportunity to acknowledge the work of Gwen Mitchell, our former Parking Services Administrator. Gwen retired in January after more than 20 years of dedicated service to the District Government. Under her leadership, Parking Services made great strides. Norma Mapp has been serving as Acting Administrator

I now have the pleasure of announcing our new Parking Services Administrator, Ms. Teri Adams. Formerly head of Parking Operations for DPW, Teri became Chief of the Curbside Management Division when that unit moved to DDOT in 2001. She brings a wealth of energy and experience to her new role and we are thrilled to have her back.

This afternoon we are pleased to share with you an overview of DPW's activities during FY 2002 and our progress so far this year. Afterward, we will be happy to take your questions.

DPW Organization And Mission

On October 1, 2002, the Department of Transportation (DDOT) completely separated from DPW and became an independent agency. Now, DDOT and DPW leadership are able to focus our respective attention and resources on the things we do best and the things we strive to do better. Our focus is on keeping the Nation's Capital clean.

Our streamlined agency has three major operational units dedicated to providing municipal services that enhance the quality of life in the District by ensuring safe, clean and attractive neighborhoods, streets and public spaces. These units are the Solid Waste Management Administration, the Parking Services Administration, and the Fleet Management Administration.

In 2000 and 2001, we asked this Council for new funds to buy trucks, improve facilities, acquire technology and hire people. We promised you that if we had the tools, we'd do the job. In 2002, we began making good on our promise.

In 2003, we are pushing hard to get every drop of productivity from that burst of funding. Our gains have been hard-won. We must now persevere in our efforts to sustain and exceed our successes.

Solid Waste Management Administration (SWMA)

Residential Trash Collection

DPW provides containerized trash collection services to more than 100,000 residential homes with 3 or fewer dwelling units. Each week, DPW's trash collection crews successfully complete over 140,000 service stops, collecting approximately 123,000 tons of trash. Additionally, DPW picks up 5,000 tons of bulk trash by appointment each year.

Two years ago, we replaced our entire trash collection fleet with 55 new packers, resulting in improved reliability and decreased overtime costs. Last year, we implemented a new work management system that tracks crew productivity and cost by route. Quality assurance efforts have resulted in Route Accountability ratings, giving crews feedback about their performance.

The benefit of these innovations is clear: DPW improved same day service delivery from 98% during FY2001 to 99.8% in FY2002. In 2003, we intend to maintain that service-delivery rate except, of course, in extreme circumstances, such as the recent winter storms, which brought snow and icy conditions to many of our routes.

Recycling

Residents receiving DPW trash collection services also receive recycling collection service provided under contract. In FY 2002, over 20,000 tons of paper, glass, metal and plastics were recycled through the residential collection program for a waste

diversion rate of 13%. This mark is below our goal and we are actively seeking ways to improve our performance in this area.

Unfortunately, service from our recycling contractor remains inconsistent. In 2002, DPW recycling contract monitors investigated 4,480 complaints of missed recycling collection. During fiscal year 2002, we levied fines in the amount of \$10,050. Fines levied thus far in FY 2003 total \$15,025 or \$25 per household missed. Our current recycling contract ends in August and we are evaluating our options moving forward.

Fortunately, District residents are still keenly interested in recycling. During the last fiscal year, we filled orders for 3,823 recycling bins. We also experienced record participation in our two household hazardous waste collection events. As an added service, we offered end-of-life recycling of unwanted computers and televisions.

DPW's recycling efforts are not limited to residential collections. Approximately 70% of the District's solid waste is generated by businesses. By reaching out to offices, hospital associations, retail outlets, restaurants and other commercial facilities, we saw an excellent opportunity to increase the amount of recyclables diverted from the waste stream.

In FY 2002, we hired three commercial recycling inspectors. These technical investigators have been hard at work for just over a year, educating the business community about its responsibility to recycle. The recycling inspectors have attended 400 community meetings, made 2099 on-site inspections and reviewed 637 commercial plans.

Street & Alley Cleaning

The Street and Alley Cleaning Division provides services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During the day, we are sweeping and cleaning residential neighborhoods, as well as high visibility commercial areas like Adams Morgan, Capitol Hill, Martin Luther King Avenue and Benning Road. At night, we collect nearly 9,000 tons of trash from the city's 2500 litter cans and we sweep the downtown core.

The quarterly Cleanliness Ratings conducted by the Office of the Clean City Coordinator provide key data that helps us deploy our citywide resources more effectively. Dirtier areas receive a more intense complement of services in an effort to raise their cleanliness ratings. Other areas received a different mix of services. In short, the cleanliness rating results provide us with the information to tailor street and alley cleaning services by neighborhood. This is a big change from the one-size-fits-all service delivery system provided in the past.

We must be on the right track, because in FY 2002, DPW surpassed its 80% goal and achieved a cleanliness rating of “clean” or “moderately clean” on 90% of the District's gateways, commercial and residential streets. This represents an enormous improvement over FY 2000s 66% rating.

We have not only found the right mix of service, we have expanded our capacity to provide that service. In FY 2002, the Street and Alley Cleaning Division:

- Expanded its Night Sweeping Program to include more streets outside the downtown core;
- Upgraded and increased the sweeper fleet to 32 pieces of equipment with an average age well within their useful lifespan.
- Expanded the alternate side of the street sweeping program and improve on-time service delivery to 93.6%;
- Improved alley cleaning efficiency by 30% with the increased use of mechanical alley sweeping equipment.
- Established the Gateway Cleaning Program. Gateways are now cleaned on Monday and Thursday of each week. SACD is currently responsible for cleaning 11 of the identified 16 Gateways. Our federal highways partner, VMS shares the responsibility of cleaning the remaining 5 Gateways.
- Re-aligned litter can collection routes, resulting in improved quality and frequency of service. In FY 2001, we installed over 300 litter cans. In FY 2002, DPW installed 824 litter cans

Leaf Collection

The Department of Public Works operates a 10-week leaf collection program from November into January. In 2002, we deployed nearly 200 personnel with 120 pieces of equipment – rakes, leaf blowers, packers, giant leaf vacs, dump trucks and roll-offs – to tackle the daunting job of clearing away these leaves from public space, as well as those raked from private property by residents.

The leaf collection schedule for each ward was again published in a brochure and mailed to over 100,000 District households. The brochure gave residents instructions

on how and when to rake their leaves to the curb for vacuuming. Residents also had the option of bagging leaves for pick-up.

The combination of a full complement of new equipment and personnel coupled with experience made a significant difference. In FY 2000, the first year of the citywide vacuum program, we collected 5,388 tons of leaves. In 2002, we removed 8014 tons of leaves. The leaf season was a success in spite of a late leaf fall and early winter storms that forced a two-week delay in the completion of the scheduled collection. An additional 6 leaf-vacs have been acquired and will be available for Fall 2003.

Snow Removal

This year, as part of the separation of DPW and the Department of Transportation, snow removal has become part of DDOT's operational budget. Nevertheless, DPW will always be part of the Snow Team and it would feel strange not to mention it in my testimony.

Perhaps we should be careful what we wish for... We asked for snow, and we finally got it! Nevertheless, new equipment has greatly improved our performance capacity. We have expanded our light plow routes from 17 to 49, ensuring greater responsiveness in residential neighborhoods. We have finally been able to test and adjust our zone-based deployment plan to give snow crews more autonomy and more support on their routes.

As we have demonstrated over the last month, we are ably prepared to handle typical storms that leave less than a foot of snow, clearing main roads – including 110 Snow Emergency Routes – within 18 hours and residential streets within 36 hours after the snow stops.

Additionally, recent snow events have taught us valuable lessons on how to better respond to the infrequent storms that leave more than 16 inches of snow on our streets. The bad news is that keeping these skills fresh year-to-year relies heavily on continuity and practice.

Overall, I think DPW and DDOT did an outstanding job of snow removal. During the public emergency, the District Snow Team carried out its primary task – ensuring public safety by clearing snow from emergency access routes necessary for passage of fire, medical, rescue and police vehicles. The snow team also cleared a vast majority of the residential streets for the convenience of residents and commuters within 60 hours following the storm.

Yes, we had challenges. The District of Columbia is not built on a flat plane like Lincoln, NE or St. Paul Minnesota. Rather, the city is draped over a series of hills. Those narrow, steep, windy residential streets proved to be our greatest trial. Quite honestly, some of our drivers have never been through a snowstorm of this magnitude. Snow trucks are not known for their easy handling and maneuverability. Some of our operators just didn't have the experience to expertly navigate during that type of storm.

But, we kept at it. We worked with OCTO to plot our problem areas on maps and in the second storm we redeployed our troops to attack those areas first. Never let it be said that we don't learn from our experiences. And, judging by the accolades we have received following the last storm, it seems we learned the lesson.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the DC snow team, whose dedication, hard work and sleepless nights made all the difference.

SWEEP

The Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program, affectionately known as SWEEP, works to educate District residents and businesses about their responsibilities regarding proper trash and sanitation procedures. The primary function of the SWEEP inspector is to change the behavior of those who have not learned to do their part in keeping the District clean. For those who still haven't gotten the message, SWEEP also issues tickets – over 7,000 in FY 02 – to those who refuse to abide by these rules.

SWEEP is a prime-time player in citywide neighborhood problem solving, coordinating internally and externally with the Neighborhood Services Initiative. SWEEP inspectors are an integral part of the eight ward-based Neighborhood Services Core Teams. Each team works collaboratively to identify persistent problem areas and develop cross-agency work plans to restore quality of life in blighted residential areas.

Like our street cleaning operation, SWEEP maximizes its effectiveness by strategically deploying its inspectors to the areas with the greatest need. This High Impact Visible Enforcement strategy, known as HIVEs, places SWEEP inspectors in selected persistent problem areas of the city for several days, where they concentrate their efforts on resolving long-standing problems and identifying ways to sustain the improvements once they've moved on.

The HIVE deployment strategy provides quantitative and qualitative feedback on outreach, education, and enforcement efforts, and provides a substantial degree of accountability for each inspector.

The Nuisance Abatement operation complements the work of the SWEEP inspector by cleaning nuisance vacant lots and other problem properties that the owners have chosen to ignore. In FY 2002, this operation cleaned over 300 properties.

PARKING SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Public Works provides on-street parking enforcement to improve public safety, the quality of life, and access to businesses by maintaining turnover of short-term public parking – whether at metered spaces or on residential streets. These goals are achieved by encouraging voluntary compliance with parking regulations and taking enforcement actions – ticketing, booting and towing – as necessary.

Enforcement

This Council authorized funding to hire an additional 138 parking officers in FY 2002. We now have 165 parking officers, or three-quarters of our authorized positions filled.

As we all know, these are high turnover positions, so our recruiting efforts are ongoing. Many of our newest hires have come from the ranks of employees displaced by reductions at DC General and the Department of Corrections. We continue to attend job fairs; we have done some newspaper advertising; we have distributed recruiting brochures in English and Spanish; we have spoken to leaders in the Asian and Hispanic communities and sent press releases to Asian-language media.

ROSA

The good news is that Parking Enforcement began the long-awaited Registration of Out-of-State Automobiles (ROSA) program. The ROSA program is intended to find individuals living in the District who have not yet registered their vehicles, cite them, and compel them to comply with the law.

On January 15, 2003, 16 parking officers began surveillance patrols aided by the new mobile digital computer technology installed in their vehicles. The ROSA teams, on a ward-by-ward basis, collect the data on out-of-state vehicles until the entire city is surveyed. Subsequent surveillance patrols result in warning notices and tickets for the vehicles that are repeatedly observed and are not in compliance with District of Columbia registration regulations. Since the ROSA teams hit the streets, they have issued 1,187 warning notices and 219 tickets.

Booting

Booting is an enforcement measure taken when vehicles accrue three or more 30-day-old (unpaid) parking tickets. DPW hired two additional boot crews that have been on the street since August, 2002. Since that time, the immobilization rate increased by 10%. Technology has helped booting teams realize increased productivity. The use of mobile computers allows the boot crews to release immobilized vehicles in less than 25 minutes.

Abandoned And Junk Vehicle Division (AJVD)

For the past 13 years, the Abandoned and Junk Vehicle Division has been charged with monitoring and removing abandoned and derelict vehicles from city streets. The Division is also responsible for the ultimate disposal of these vehicles, whether they are burned-out hulks or late-model SUVs.

Last fall, we opened up our new “Mission Control Room” in the Parking Services complex on West Virginia Ave., NE, to house the investigators and their support team. The move dramatically reduced travel time, allowing investigators to spend more time in the field. Working from a common platform and using the same data has increased the communication and processing speed between Call Center personnel and AJV staff. The next technological step will be to add mapping applications to better track demand and to more precisely deploy personnel.

Despite our best efforts, abandoned and junk vehicles continue to bedevil us. In January alone, DPW received 2,706 service requests for abandoned vehicle investigations. This demand for service far outweighs our capacity.

However, DPW is thinking creatively to remedy this persistent public nuisance. In October 2002, we achieved a 35% on-time performance rating for investigations while in January 2003, the rating increased to 44%. While the performance rating is still less than desirable, we have made, and continue to make, improvements.

Through a combination of our own internal efforts and legislative support from this Committee, we have developed a plan to fight the onslaught of abandoned and junk vehicles. We project that we will be able to greatly improve our performance by the end of this fiscal year.

Fleet Management Administration

The Fleet Management Administration gets us where we need to go – day in and day out – by procuring and maintaining the hundreds of District vehicles we need to sweep streets, plow snow, collect trash and even conduct the Clean City surveys.

Operations

Fleet has continued to increase operations efficiency through the intelligent adoption of new technology. In the past year, we developed one of the District Government's first interactive Intranet websites. This pass code-protected, internal website enables our customers to look up Preventative Maintenance (PM) schedules for their agency vehicles. Individuals may also check the status of equipment in the shop for repair. Additionally, we have:

- Opened the District's first automated fueling, lubricant and car wash facility at 1835 West Virginia Avenue, NE. Between March 6, 2002 and the end of the fiscal year, we have logged nearly 7,000 washes.
- Renovated and re-opened the Ft. Totten fueling station and truck wash.
- Helped DCPS and MPD significantly lower their fuel costs by reducing the use of commercial fuel cards and higher priced commercial pump fuel.
- Reduced inventory from \$1.1 million to \$800,000 in FY 02; improved parts fill rates to an average of over 96%, and hired experienced parts foreman, formerly with the Department of Corrections.
- Re-established the practice of meeting with all parts and maintenance vendors.

New Equipment

In FY2002, Fleet Management exceeded its target goal (97 percent) by achieving an average of 98 percent for overall availability of mission critical vehicles. A large part of this past year's improved scorecard ratings can be attributed to new vehicles and equipment. In FY 2002, the District's fleet increased by 424 new vehicles, 66 percent of which were replacements for old equipment. This has reduced the *average* age of the District's fleet from eight years in FY 2000 to three years in FY 2002.

Preventive Maintenance (PM)

The Fleet Management Administration buys and maintains DPW's vehicles as well as those for over 30 other agencies. To better serve these agencies, we continue to provide service six days per week with our evening shift hours extended to 11:30 PM. In 2002, our shop completed 14,255 service appointments.

The PM program has made the crucial difference in achieving fleet readiness for seasonal activities. Our major challenge is encouraging other agencies to adhere to their preventive maintenance schedules. In fact, the Mayor has made scheduled PM completions a quarterly agenda item at his cabinet meetings. Each Director whose agency failed to keep its PM appointments will be called on to explain why. Needless to say, more and more appointments are being kept.

Innovations and Special Programs

Mayor Williams has made a commitment to safeguarding the environment, including adhering to clean air standards. Our Fleet Management Administration has been recognized for having one of the most visible natural gas programs in the country. We have invested in 153 low-emissions alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) since 2001. We are also acquiring two natural gas trash packers, which should arrive on or before April 1.

Agency Management – Office of Administrative Services

Behind every successful program is a cadre of professionals working to ensure that our field operations have the tools they need to do their jobs well. These tools include just-in-time procurements, facility management and upgrades, training, risk management and state-of-the-art information technology.

Contracting

The Department of Public Works understands its responsibility to local businesses. During my tenure as Director DPW has reserved 50 percent of the annual local discretionary budget for Local, Small, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, as required by law. In FY 2002, we again exceeded our goal. The annual LSDBE set-aside target was \$25,189,650. The amount of local discretionary funds awarded to LSDBE vendors was over \$34 million.

We also strive for efficient, timely procurement. In FY 2002, 85 percent of the purchase requisitions resulted in a purchase order within 30 days. In all, 1134 original purchase orders and over 205 contracts were processed. This division purchased approximately \$11,000,000 worth of vehicles and equipment. These acquisitions were completed, on average, within 62 days of receipt of the request.

Facilities Management Division

DPW's Facilities Management Division is our key liaison to the Office of Property Management (OPM), and shares responsibility for maintaining DPW's more than 23 buildings containing 6 million square feet, located on about 95 non-contiguous acres of land. Facility assessments and renovations remain ongoing. In 2002, 85% of all planned facilities improvements were completed on time and on budget. The facilities projects completed in fiscal year 2002 include modernization of the Snow Management Center and renovation of SWMA 's Solid Waste Collection facility at 2860 South Capital Street, SE. This year, the Facilities management division has:

- Developed and implemented facility work order request procedures;
- Completed needs assessment for all DPW facilities to include equipment, space, and furniture;

- Improved community relations through regular ANC meeting attendance and door-to-door visits with key neighborhood leaders.

TRAINING

DPW remains committed to investing in the career development of all DPW personnel. Our goal is ensuring that each employee receives at least one training experience per year, including a New Employee Orientation. In 2002, the Public Works Academy offered 19 courses, creating 2073 training experiences for DPW employees, an increase of 30% over last year.

Additionally, DPW is among only three agencies that have offered cultural awareness training to front-line employees to help them better understand the needs and challenges faced by the city's Pan-Asian community. In 2003, DPW academy is developing an expanded cultural awareness program as part of our outreach commitment to residents with limited English proficiency (LEP).

LABOR MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

At the Department of Public Works, we are strong advocates of Labor Management Partnerships as a new paradigm for the working relationship with our Union members and leadership.

The Labor Management Partnership at our Fleet Administration has been the leader in this arena. New Partnerships have been formed at our Solid Waste and Parking Services Administrations, as well as in our Administrative Services division. And this week we will restart our Senior Steering Committee, to include representatives of all our Partnerships to help address policy issues at the highest levels.

The Labor Management Partnerships have brought about a new way of doing business at DPW. We now work in an environment in which all employees are valued and respected, in which power is shared and decisions are reached through consensus. We are fostering a spirit that shows people that we are all in this together. The bottom-line result is that formal grievances are down, problems are resolved at the lowest levels and we all have our eyes trained on the mission at hand.

RISK AND SAFETY

In cooperation with our Labor Management Partnership, we brought on board a Risk Manager/Safety Officer who has been assessing all of our operations to identify areas of vulnerability. He has also begun developing training programs designed to help us prevent workplace accidents. Something as “simple” as standardizing and documenting our procedures for reporting vehicle accidents has gone a long way toward improving accountability.

To underscore our commitment to on-the-job safety and responsibility, we established an in-house alcohol and controlled substance testing facility for all CDL drivers within DPW and DDOT.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

More than ever, the Department of Public Works believes that the success of our efforts can only be achieved through effective two-way communication with our residents and community stakeholders. We count on the feedback we receive through the Citywide Call Center to let us know where we should be focusing our resources. In turn, we want to do everything we can to better educate District residents about DPW services, how they are delivered and the responsibility that we all share to keep our city clean.

DPW has printed its primary public education brochure in both English and Spanish. As demand emerges and as resources permit, we plan additional translations for LEP residents.

DPW events – from snow emergencies to street sweeping changes – are routinely announced in advance and distributed to media outlets for inclusion in news briefs and community calendars. Announcements and press releases are also posted on our website and sent via fax and email to city officials. I'd like to thank Council members for sharing these updates with their constituents.

CLOSE

In closing, let me say that success, in my mind, is not attaining perfection, but making continued progress. Every day, we must adapt to change, working in new ways and moving toward an ever-higher level of performance – because that's what our residents expect from their government.

In the past year, we have made the kind of progress that I only dreamed of ten years ago. I still can't believe that I get to sit in the Director's chair now that all the pieces are finally coming together. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the pivotal role played by this committee in achieving this success. To the employees of the Department of Public Works, who have truly stepped up their efforts to ensure excellent service delivery, I say thank you. I am proud to be the leader of your team.

Working together, we have made progress. Working together, we will continue to do so. Thank you for your time. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have for us.